

18 January 1962

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: Minutes of Special Group Meeting, 18 January 1962

PRESENT: General Taylor, Mr. Johnson, Mr. Gilpatric, and
Mr. Bissell

The Attorney General was present for Item 1.

1. Cuba

General Lansdale distributed a paper on Cuba, which he described as an up-dated program review, together with a phased outline of short-term tasks assigned to individual agencies. It was agreed that this would be discussed at next week's meeting.

2. United Nations Resolution on Satellites

Mr. Johnson reported that State and Defense have agreed that objects which achieve orbit should be listed as to purpose, in the process of complying with the UN resolution requiring registration of satellites. He identified seven categories of use. Mr. Johnson, with Mr. Gilpatric agreeing, said that this represents minimal compliance with the US-sponsored resolution.

Mr. Johnson also pointed out that registration in this sense is consistent with the stand that there should be freedom of space in the same manner as freedom of the seas. He said that the U.S. adopted this position as long ago as 1959.

On the other hand, Mr. Bissell expressed serious reservations about releasing information of this type. He pointed out that this represents a sizeable departure from the principles earlier agreed on as to publicity on satellites. He stressed particularly the situation that will result when a large number of various kinds of reconnaissance satellites are in orbit and will have to be identified as such. He also noted the impossibility of conducting any truly covert launchings, under such conditions. He suggested as a possible alternative the idea, discussed at an earlier meeting, of registering satellites but not identifying them as to purpose.

Mr. Bissell said, however, that he was unable to state an official CIA position on this matter since it was of sufficient importance to require the personal attention of Mr. McCona. The Group agreed that in due course higher authority should be informed of whatever procedure is eventually decided on.

NSC review(s) completed.

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3. Reconnaissance

Mr. Bissell gave a brief run down on the successful TACKLE mission, with particular reference to weather, and fighter and radar reaction. He noted that at least a preliminary read-out of the results should be available by next week. He also was asked to collect any further information that might be available on the possibility that enemy fighters actually achieved an altitude of 70,000 feet.

Thomas A. Farrott

Distribution

Mr. Johnson
Mr. Gilpatric
Mr. McCone
General Taylor